

IN THE CLAIMS:

The invention claimed is:

1. (Currently amended) A mobile phone ~~having means configured and arranged with:~~  
a display having means for displaying text/graphics;  
means an arrangement of keys means for inputting alphanumeric characters to the phone,  
means for selecting desired operational functionalities of the phone and means for means for  
navigating sub-operational functionalities within a selected operational functionality wherein the  
improvement is characterized by; wherein the improvement is characterized by- and  
circuitry configured and arranged means for hinting making a user aware of one or more  
next possible sub-operational functionalities available for user selection in said selected  
operational functionality such that said hinted one or more next possible sub-operational  
functionalities is communicated via a suitable alerting mechanism.
2. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 1 wherein said ~~means for~~  
~~making a user aware~~ suitable alerting mechanism ~~is further characterized by~~ a first text menu list  
of suggested next possible sub-functionalities available for selection, said first text menu list  
being shown on said display ~~means in response to a~~ chosen desired operational functionality  
~~being chosen by said functionality selecting means.~~
3. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 1 wherein said suitable  
alerting mechanism ~~means for making a user aware is further characterized by illuminating~~  
comprises one or more selection hinting keys configured and arranged for illumination each of  
which is associated with a next possible sub-operational functionalities functionality available  
for user selection.
4. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 2 wherein a text menu list  
containing at least one next possible sub-operational functionality is displayed in response to the  
operation of a corresponding one of said one or more selection hinting keys.

5. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 1 wherein said circuitry is further configured and arranged including means for deactivating said suitable alerting mechanism means for making a user aware of next possible sub-operational functionalities.
6. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 1 wherein said suitable alerting mechanism ~~means for making a user aware is further characterized by~~ comprises one or more user action prompting instructions.
7. (Previously presented) The mobile phone as defined in claim 6 wherein said user action prompting instruction is a text message representation.
8. (Previously presented) The mobile phone as defined in claim 6 wherein said user action prompting instruction is a graphic message representation.
9. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 3 wherein said illuminated selection hinting key is color illuminated.
10. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 3 wherein said illuminated selection hinting key is arranged to ~~flashes~~ flash on and off.
11. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 1 [8] wherein said suitable alerting mechanism comprises graphic representation is further characterized by showing on the mobile phone display means one or more selection hinting keys graphically represented on the mobile phone display each of which graphically represented selection hinting keys is configured and associated with ~~for possible selection to activate~~ a next possible sub-operational functionality corresponding to the given operational context and sequence progression step in the selected desired operational functionality.
12. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 1 wherein said suitable alerting mechanism comprises ~~means for making a user aware is further characterized by~~

~~providing~~ one or more distinctive tones each of which tones corresponds to a given selection hinting key associated with a next possible sub-operational functionality ~~functionalities~~ available for user selection.

13. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 1, wherein said suitable alerting mechanism comprises ~~means for making a user aware is further characterized by~~ an icon of a selection hinting key corresponding to a short-cut key for carrying out the operational sequence progression steps corresponding to the selected desired operational functionality.

14. (Currently amended) A mobile phone configured and arranged with ~~having a display for showing text/graphics, keypad means~~ an arrangement of keys for inputting alphanumeric characters to the phone and, ~~for selecting and accessing desired operational functionalities and features of the phone, wherein the phone has at~~ at least one menu driven operational function, and, circuitry configured and arranged for hinting the improvement comprising means for ~~making a user aware of~~ one or more possible next feature selections available in the menu driven operational function.

15. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 14 wherein said hinting one or more possible next features circuitry is arranged for ~~means for making a user aware is further characterized by highlighting~~ said one or more hinted next feature selections shown in a menu list of features in the menu driven operational function.

16. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 14 wherein said hinting one or more possible next features circuitry is arranged for ~~means for making a user aware is further characterized by voice announcement of~~ said one or more hinted next feature selections available from a list of features in the menu driven operational function.

17. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as define in claim 16 wherein said hinting one or more possible next features circuitry is arranged with ~~further characterized by~~ voice recognition ~~means~~ for responding to a spoken feature selection ~~spoken by the user~~.

18. (Currently amended) A mobile phone configured and arranged with ~~having~~ a display screen, a memory for storing at least one instruction set for carrying out the functions of the mobile phone, ~~keypad means~~ an arrangement of keys for selecting a desired function and for operating the mobile phone, ~~the improvement characterized by means for providing an circuitry~~ configured and arranged for providing a hinting indication of next possible functionalities available for selection corresponding to the operational context and sequence progression steps of the given selected desired function.

19. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 18 wherein said ~~means~~ circuitry for providing ~~an~~ a hinting indication ~~comprises is further characterized by~~ a visual indication of one or more hinting keys each of which hinting keys is associated with a next possible functionality ~~available for selection~~.

20. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 19 further comprises ~~characterized in that the keypad means is~~ a physical keypad.

21. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 18 further comprising ~~characterized in that the keypad is~~ a virtual keypad.

22. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 19 further arranged for showing ~~characterized in that~~ a text message associated with each of said one or more hinting keys ~~is shown~~ on the display screen to explain the functionality of the key.

23. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 19 wherein further ~~characterized in that~~ said visual indication is an illuminated hinting key.

24. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 23 ~~wherein further characterized in that~~ said illuminated hinting key is a colored hinting key.

25. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 24 ~~wherein further characterized in that~~ said colored hinting key is arranged to change ~~changes~~ color to provide said visual indication.

26. (Currently amended) The mobile phone as defined in claim 18 wherein ~~said means~~ circuitry for providing ~~an~~ a hinting indication is further comprises ~~characterized by~~ audio tones corresponding to one or more hinting keys each of which hinting keys is associated with a next possible functionality ~~available for selection~~.

27. (Currently amended) A mobile phone configured and arranged with ~~having a~~ display screen, electronic circuitry ~~circuit means~~ for carrying out the operational functions of the phone, a memory ~~means~~ coupled to the electronic circuitry ~~means~~ for storing at least one instruction set for controlling the operation of the phone, and ~~means an~~ arrangement of keys for selecting a desired operational function, and circuitry configured and arranged ~~the improvement characterized by means~~ for hinting at next possible operational functionalities available for selection corresponding to the operational context and progression stage in the given selected desired function.

28. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:  
~~for~~ providing hinting capabilities in a mobile telephone ~~characterized by the steps of~~:  
identifying a desired operational function;  
selecting the identified desired operational function;  
determining additional sub-functionalities available for the selected operational function;  
associating a key of the mobile phone with each of the available sub-functionalities as a  
hinting key; and

identifying one or more of the associated hinting keys to hint at one or more of the next possible sub-functionalities available for selection corresponding to the given operational context and sequence progression step in the selected operational function.

29. (Currently amended) The method as defined in claim 28 further comprising ~~wherein the step of determining additional sub-functionalities is further characterized by identifying~~ all additional next possible functionalities available for selection.

30. (Currently amended) The method as defined in claim 28 further comprising ~~wherein the step of identifying one or more associated keys is characterized by illuminating the~~ hinting key for hinting to make a user aware of its availability for selection as a next possible operational functionality.

31. (Currently amended) The method as defined in claim 30 wherein ~~the steps of illuminating the~~ hinting key ~~is further characterized by~~ comprises illuminating the hinting key in a color.

32. (Currently amended) The method as defined in claim 31 wherein ~~the step of illuminating the~~ hinting key ~~is further~~ comprises ~~characterized by~~ flashing the hinting key on and off.

33. (Currently amended) The method as defined in claim 28 wherein ~~the step of identifying one or more associated~~ hinting keys further comprises ~~is characterized by~~ showing an icon representing the associated hinting key on the display of the mobile phone for hinting to make a user aware of its availability for selection as a next possible operational functionality.

34. (Currently amended) The method as defined in claim 33 wherein ~~further characterized in that the associated~~ hinting key is a short-cut key.

35. (Currently amended) The method as defined in claim 28 further comprising ~~wherein the step of identifying one or more of the associated keys includes the step of providing one or more distinctive audio tones each of which tones corresponds to an identified associated~~ hinting key.

36. (Currently amended) The method as defined in claim 28 further comprising ~~characterized by~~ operating one or more of the associated hinting keys to select the sub-functionality corresponding to the operated associated hinting key.

37. (Currently amended) The method as defined in claim 36 further comprising ~~wherein the step of operating one or more of the associated~~ hinting keys through ~~is further characterized by~~ voice recognition operation by speaking the name of the hinting key.

38. (Currently amended) A computer program stored in a computer readable medium for carrying out the method steps of claim 28.